592 needed the attention of his wife did he hang his hammock in the house.

593 The nuclear family within this context was clearly a less important social unit than the extended family. Its most important functions were, of course, procreation and the raising of children. The man always brought his game to his wife, but unless it was only enough for a few people, it was cooked and shared by the whole household and even the village. Man and wife performed small personal services for each other, but these could easily have been done by any other member of the opposite sex. Since the children grew up in a large family, a great deal of their upbringing was entrusted to other members of the household. By the age of five years the boys were already incorporated into groups 857 of their age mates. The younger children usually played in the village, but the groups of boys over eight years of age began to range out on the savannahs and in the smaller stretches of gallery forest, shooting small birds, gathering fruit, and bathing in the streams. The boys had great freedom and a minimum of parental supervision. Only when they were about twelve years of age did they begin to become a part of the adult economy and even this was only in certain tasks such as garden clearing, planting, and fishing. After they were married and had achieved warrior status they became fully functioning members of the community.

Girls began to help their mothers in all of the female chores at an early age, but served especially to tend the smaller children when the mothers had to work outside the village.

Husband and wife occa-
594 sionally go to the gardens for the ostensible purpose of
[833] digging yams, but the true purpose of these occasions is almost invariably amorous. Each man is, however, responsible for providing his own family with those necessities of life that must be obtained in trade. A good husband clothes
[581] his wife and children, provides them with trinkets, and buys tools. These items are occasionally provided for other members of the extended family, especially unmarried women and their children, but it is recognized that a man's primary responsibilities in these matters are to his own wife and children. The individualizing tendency of rubber production and trade, is thus an important factor in distinguishing the nuclear family as a social unit. Otherwise, the organization of village and household activities and the ease of divorce make it quite weak.

593 The Mundurucú are devoted parents and bestow a great deal of affection and attention on their offspring. How-
[855] ever, children are frequently placed in the care of the mother's sisters or mother, or left with a young girl of the household when the mother is busy or out of the village. The children, like children in most societies with extended
[866] families, derive security from a number of persons and may place dependency on a wide range of people.

● 857 The roles of boys and girls among the Mundurucú an-
868 ticipate their future positions in life. Girls begin to join in the work of the females at an early age, starting with baby tending and later helping in farinha manufacture. They accordingly tend to spend much time in and around their houses and are gradually incorporated into the economy of the matrilocal extended family, in which presumably they will also spend their adult life.

[562] The boys, on the other hand, are given the greatest freedom. They wander from house to house and play in the village or in the neighboring savannah and under-

12: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
SQ13 Mundurucu SQ13

brush. Boys of about twelve and more, who live in the men's house, have very loose ties with their households. Only a house-by-house census could accurately determine where each of these boys belongs, for they are bound only by ties of affection to the houses of their mothers.

Central to the relative independence of the boys as compared to the girls is the fact that male labor is not oriented about any household economy, and the boys take little part in adult male labor until they reach the age of fourteen or fifteen. A few years after this time, most marry and shift their household affiliation. Unlike the girl, the boy is not reared within the social unit in which he will take permanent membership, and strong ties and obligations to the extended family are not enforced upon him. And since the extended family has its core in a group of related and coöperating females, it is not expected that a boy will help in their work.

The nature of male work combines with the social structural factors to make the boys' life so carefree. Young boys cannot take part in the hunt nor can they cut trees for garden clearings. They are expected to help clear underbrush during the latter operation, but the performance of such duties occurs only during a limited period at the end of the rains. Otherwise, they prepare for their future roles as hunters and fishermen through play. They gather wild fruits for their own consumption and shoot little birds from blinds in the underbrush. Or a band of boys may spend a day wandering along the banks of a stream to shoot smaller species of fish with the bow and arrow. When the boy reaches about fourteen years of age, he has grown sufficiently in strength and skill to participate occasionally in a hunting or fishing trip, and within two or three years he joins the men in most of their activities. He is then old enough to marry and, if there is no girl in his own village